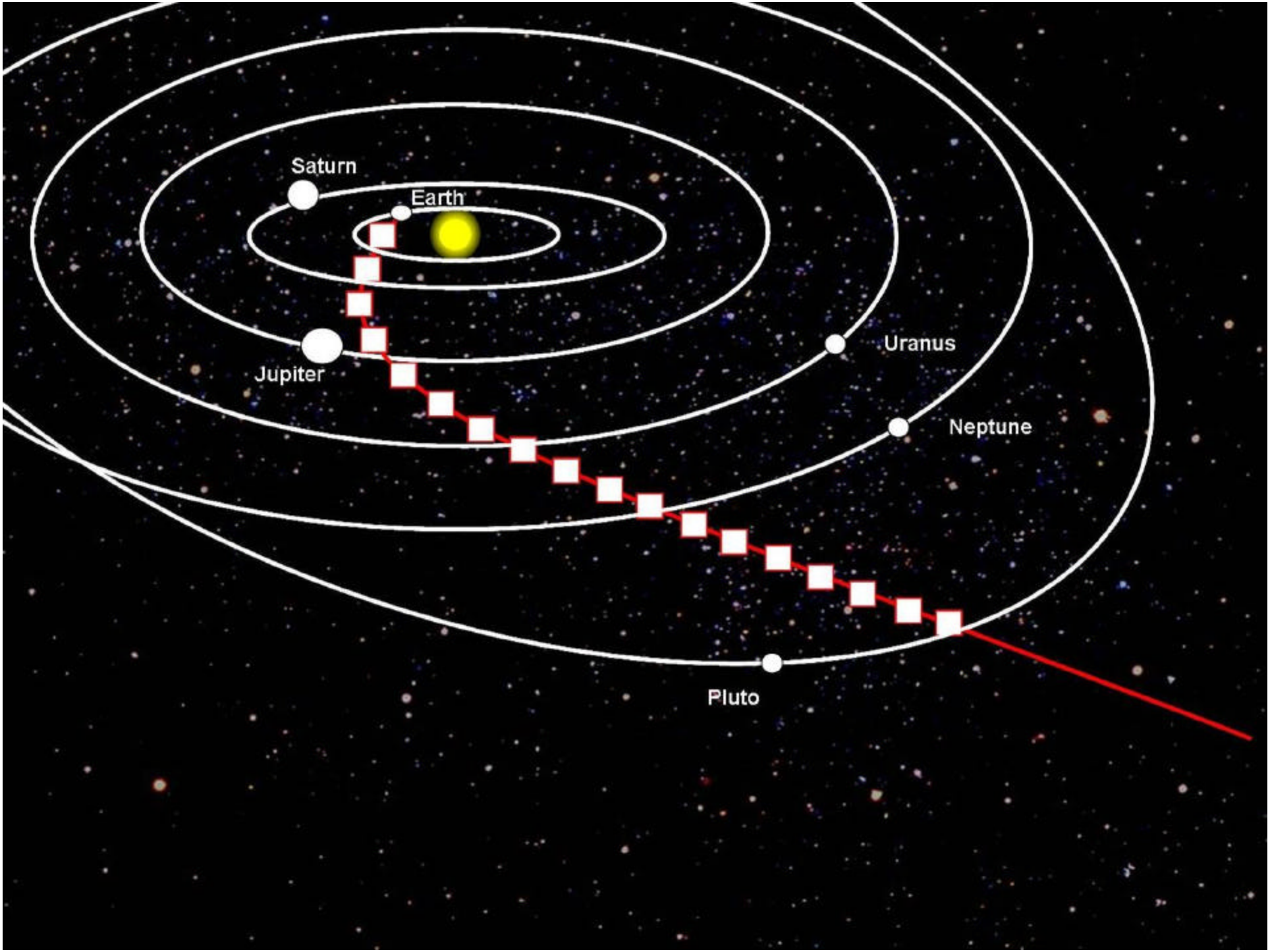
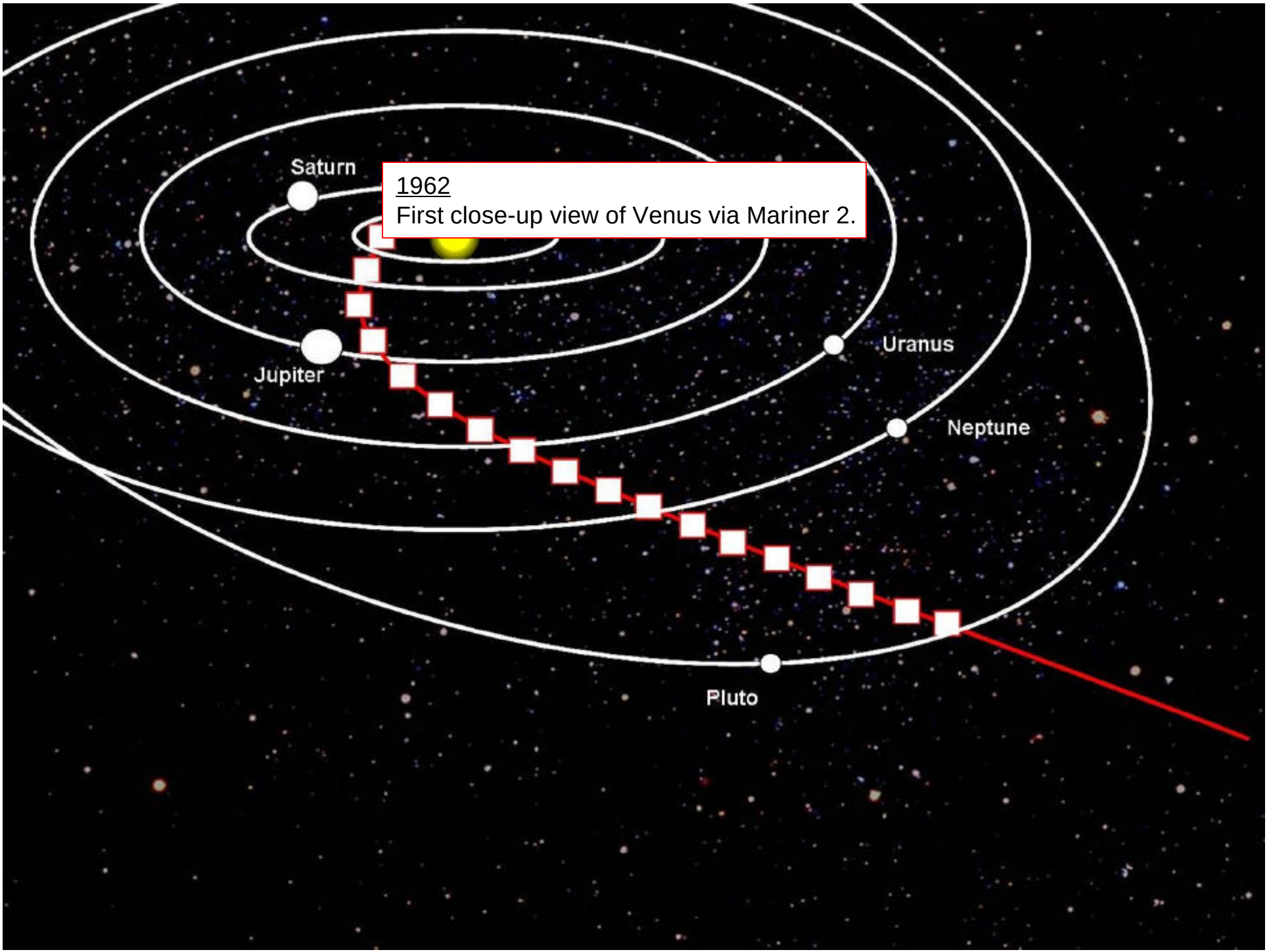
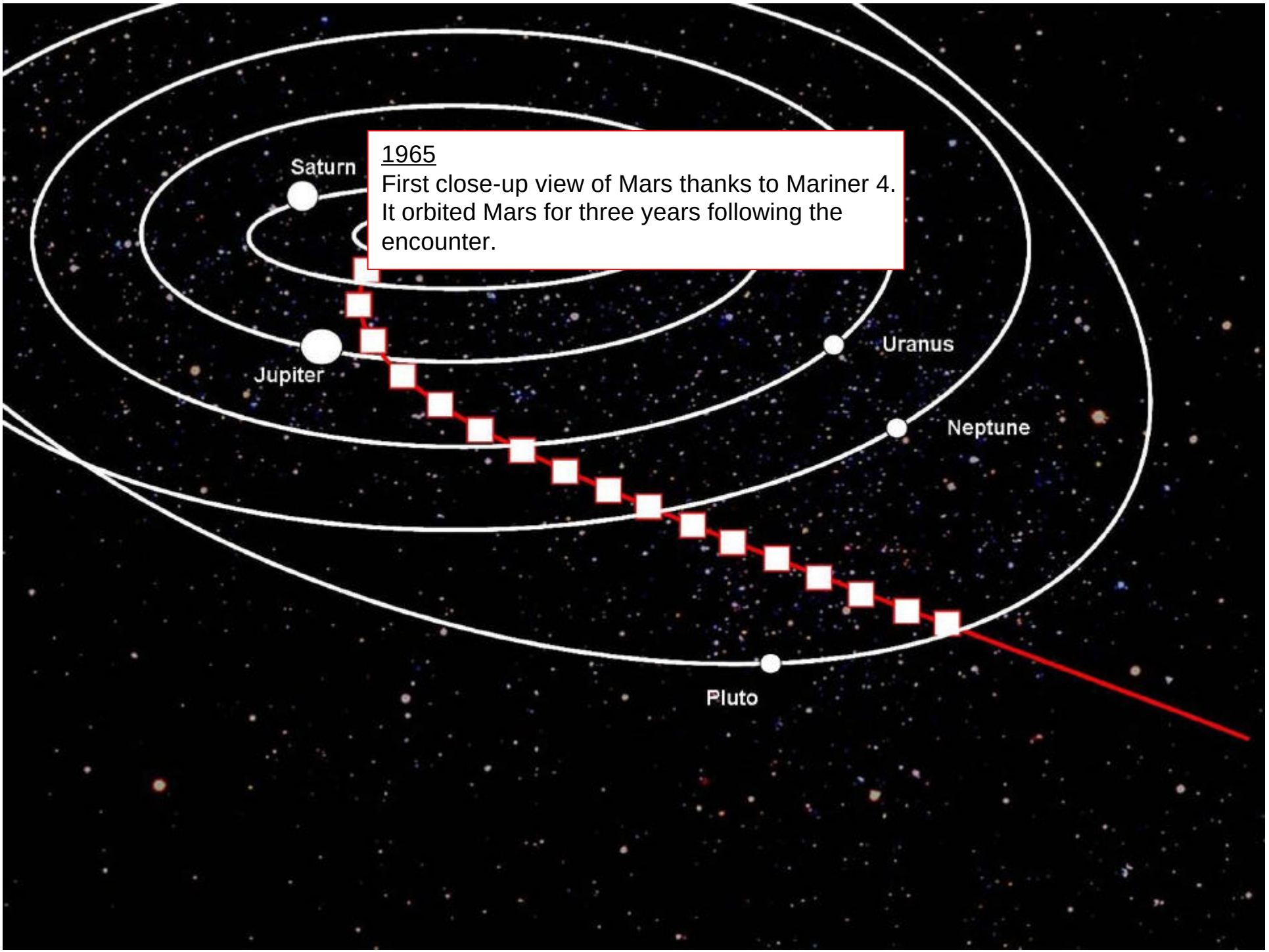
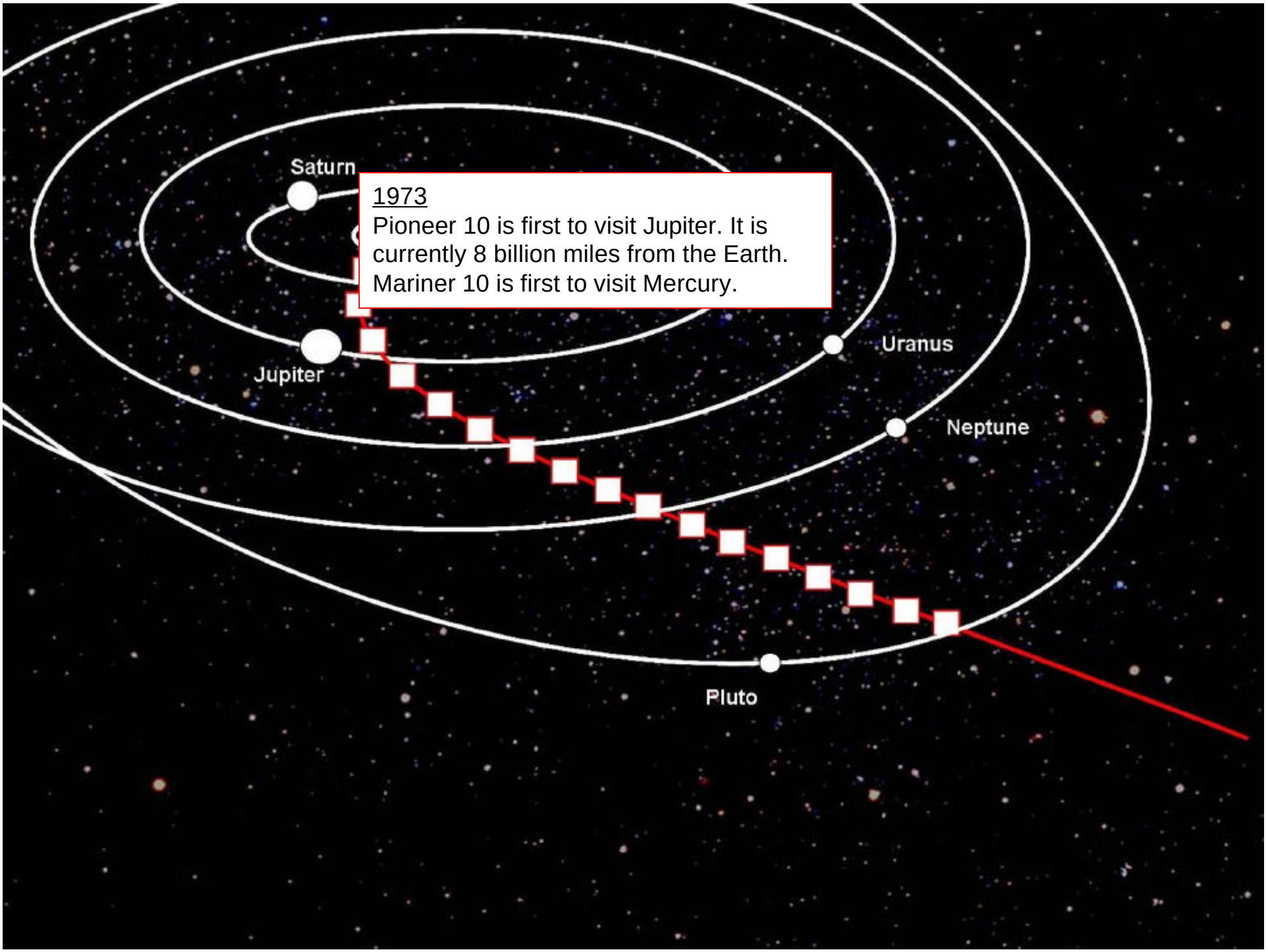
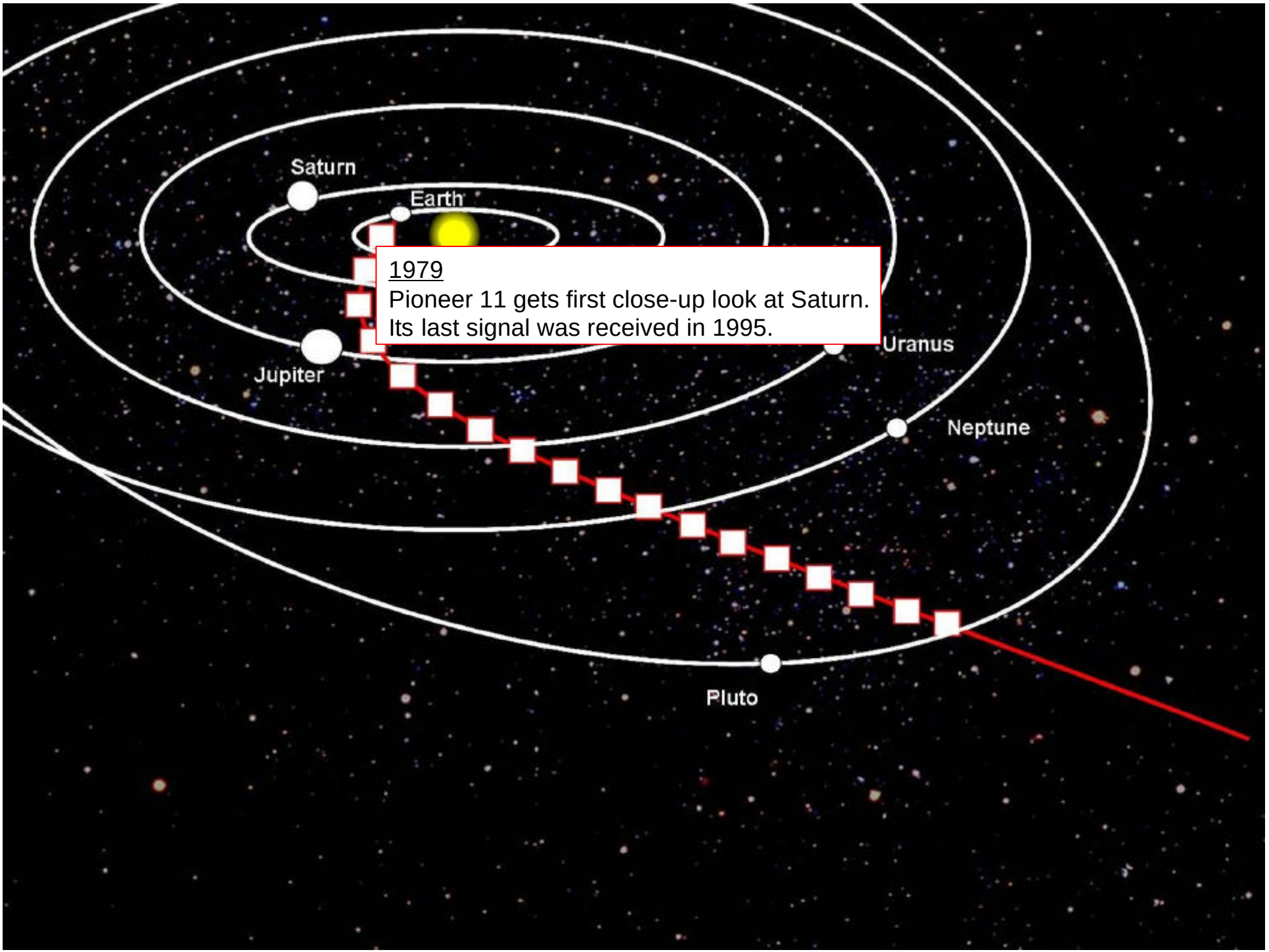
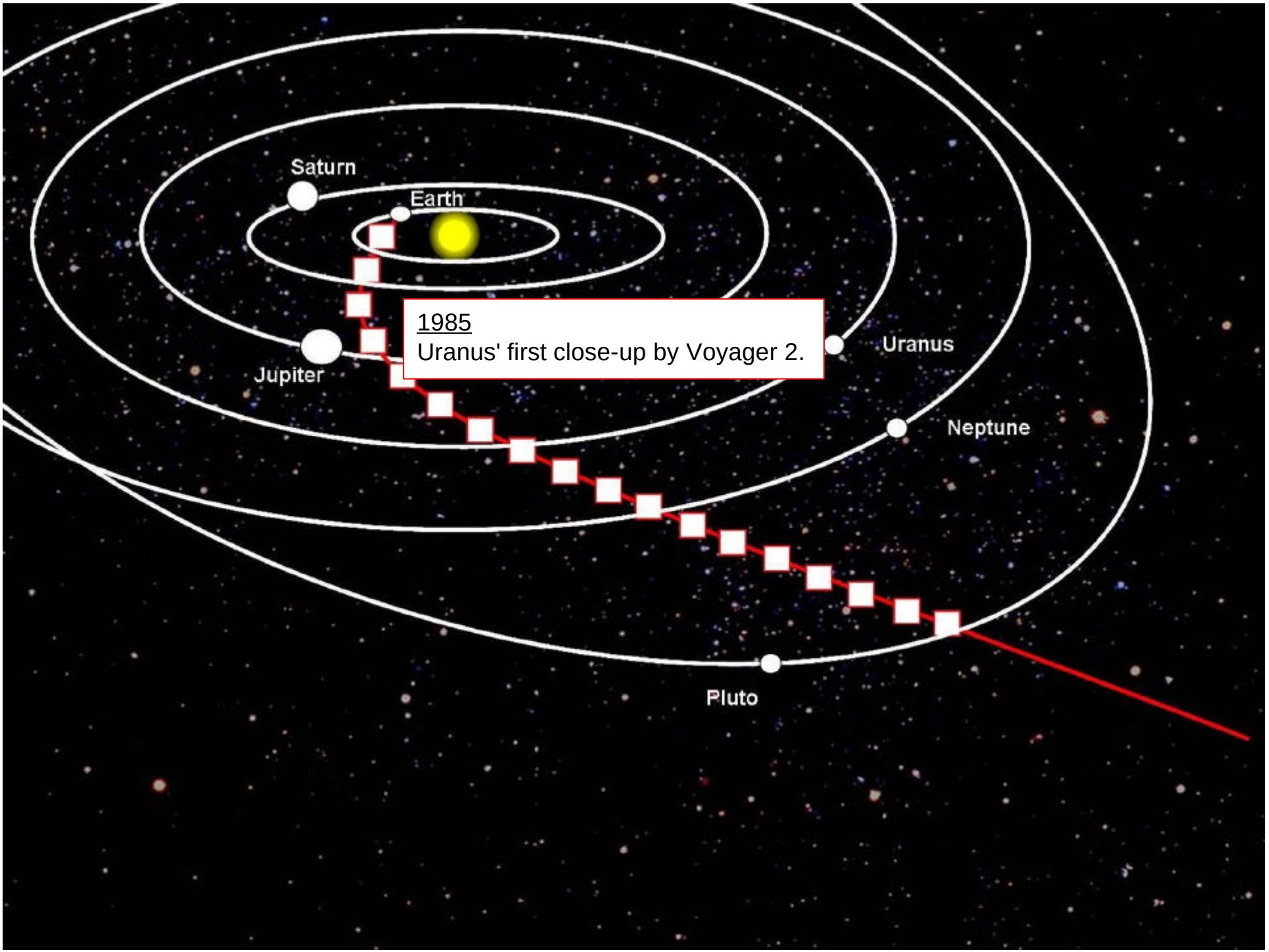

Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Uranus
Neptune
Pluto

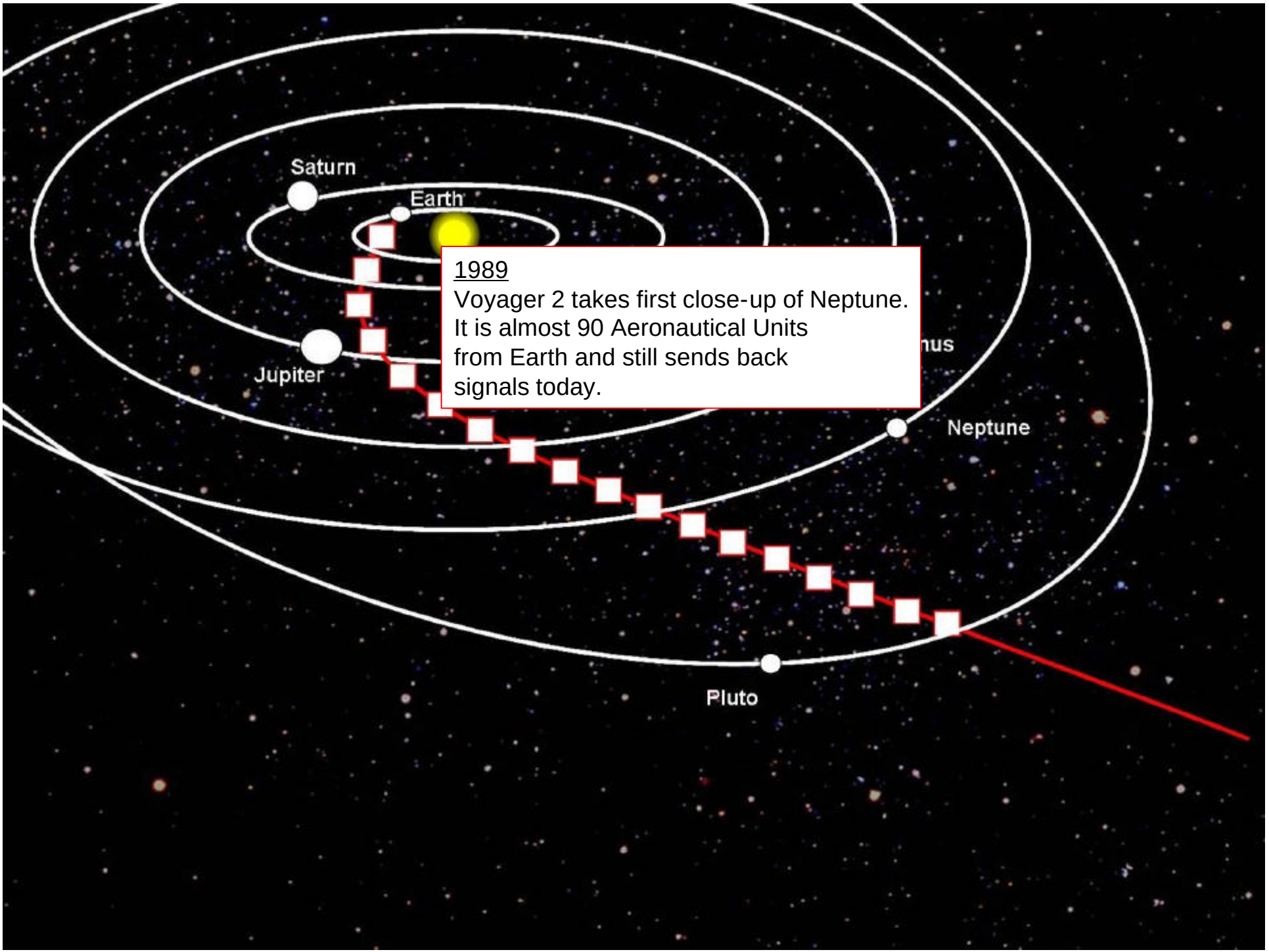

Saturn
1962
First close-up view of Venus via Mariner 2.
Jupiter
Uranus
Neptune
Pluto

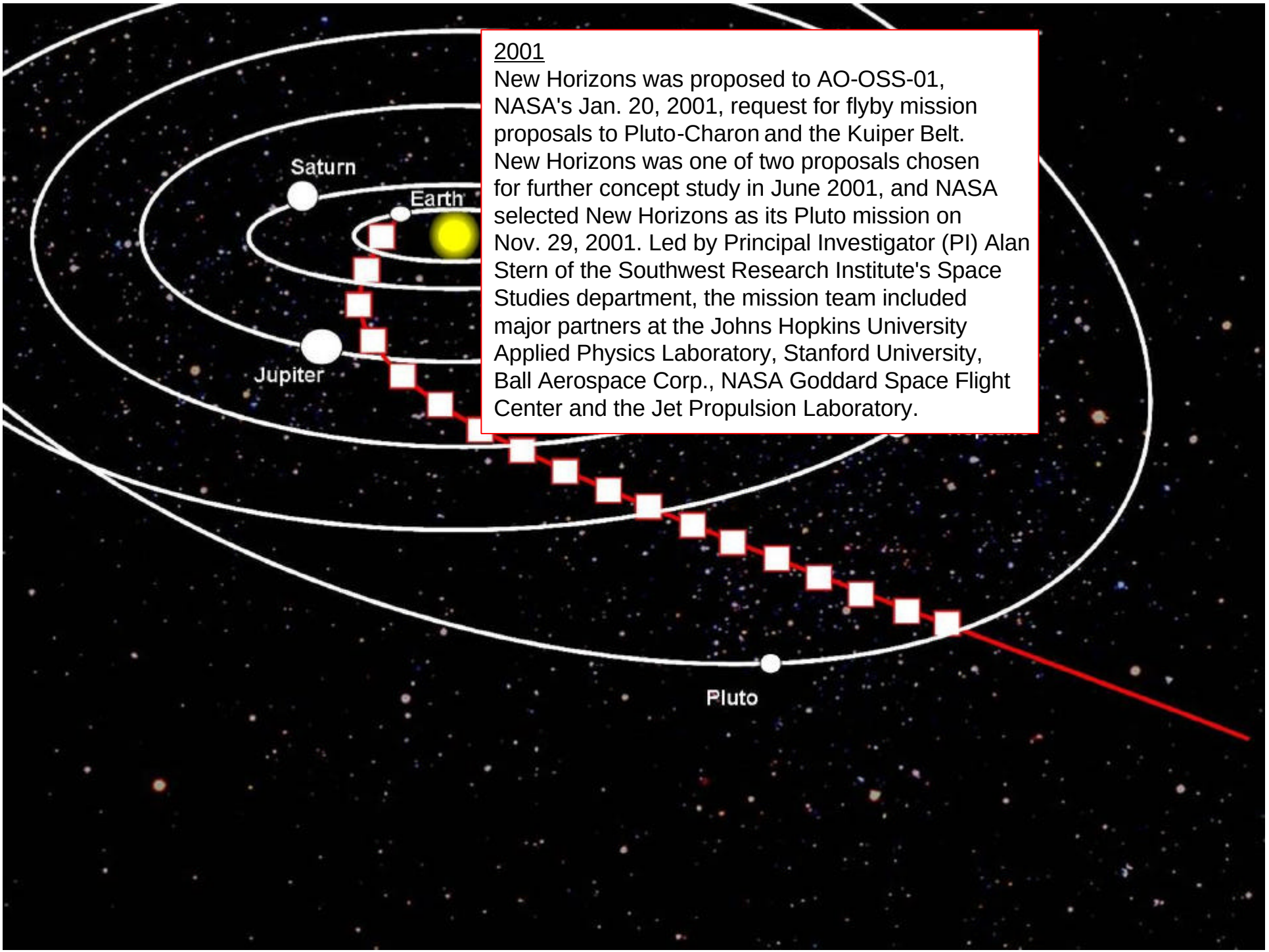

1965
First close-up view of Mars thanks to Mariner 4. It orbited Mars for three years following the encounter.
Saturn
Jupiter
Uranus
Neptune
Pluto


Saturn
1973
Pioneer 10 is first to visit Jupiter. It is currently 8 billion miles from the Earth.
Mariner 10 is first to visit Mercury.
Jupiter
Uranus
Neptune
Pluto


Saturn
Earth
1979
Pioneer 11 gets first close-up look at Saturn.
Its last signal was received in 1995.
Jupiter
Uranus
Neptune
Pluto

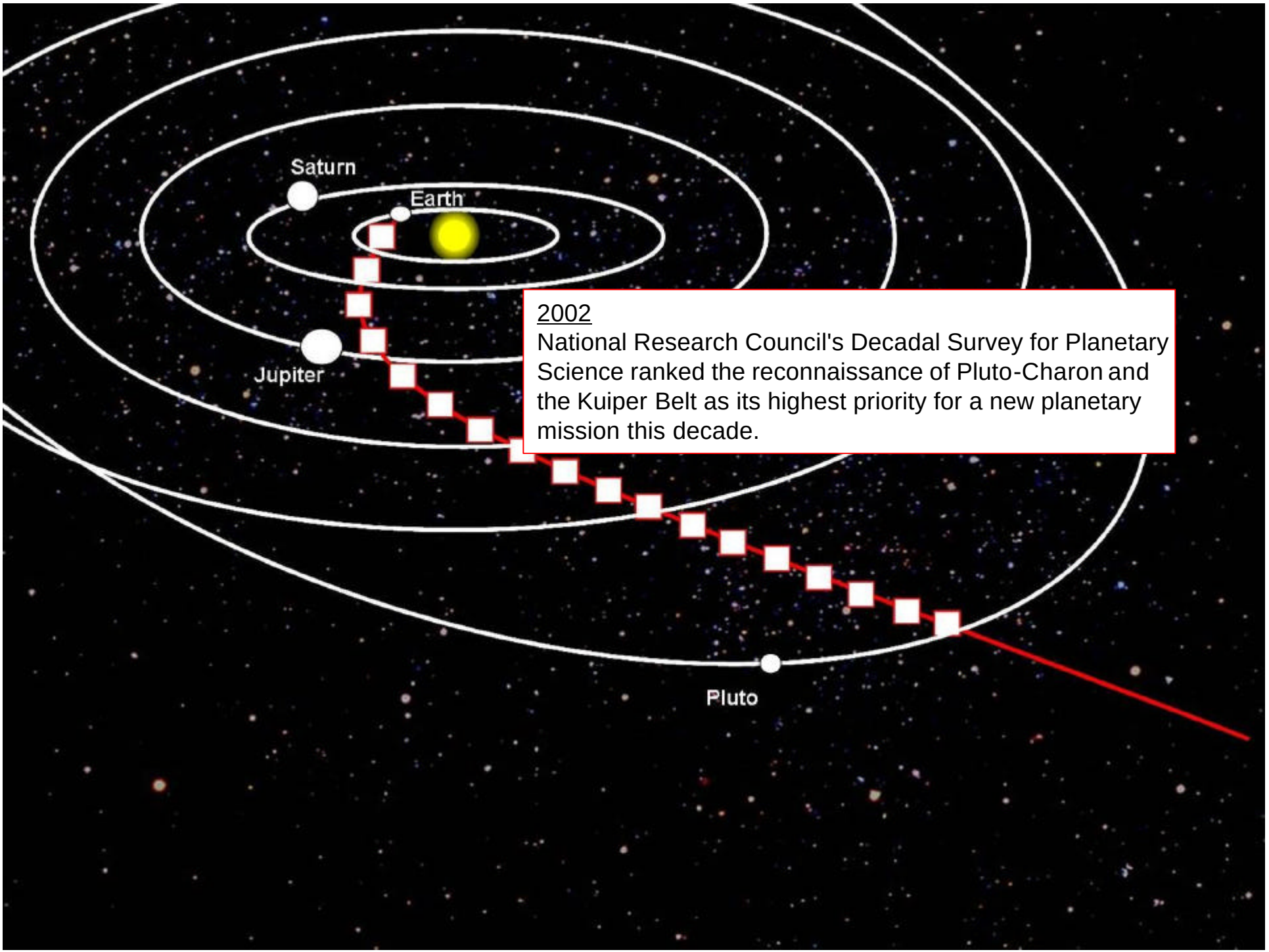

Saturn
Earth
1985
Uranus' first close-up by Voyager 2.
Jupiter
Uranus
Neptune
Pluto


Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Neptune
Pluto
1989
Voyager 2 takes first close-up of Neptune.
It is almost 90 Aeronautical Units
from Earth and still sends back
signals today.



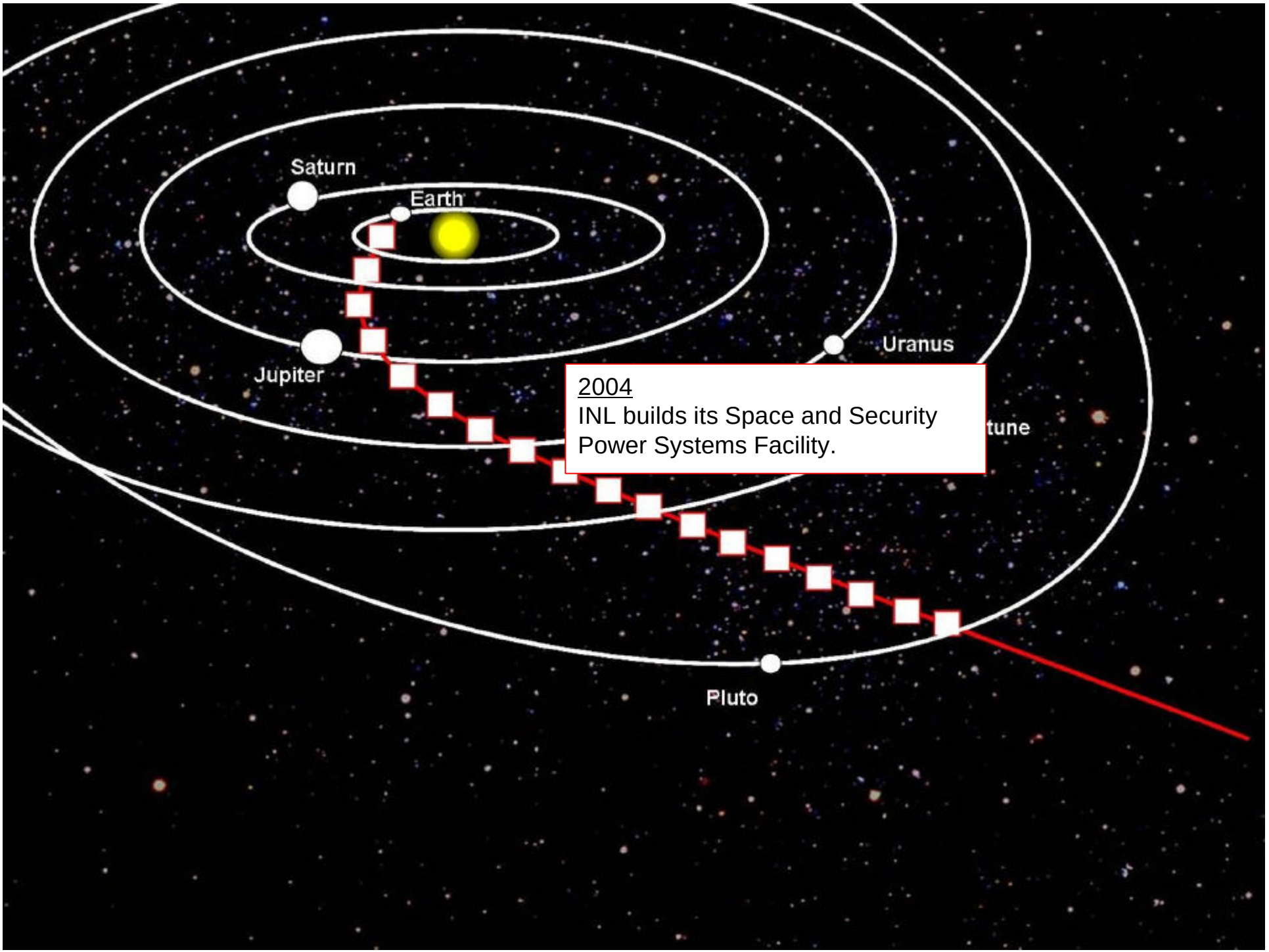
2001

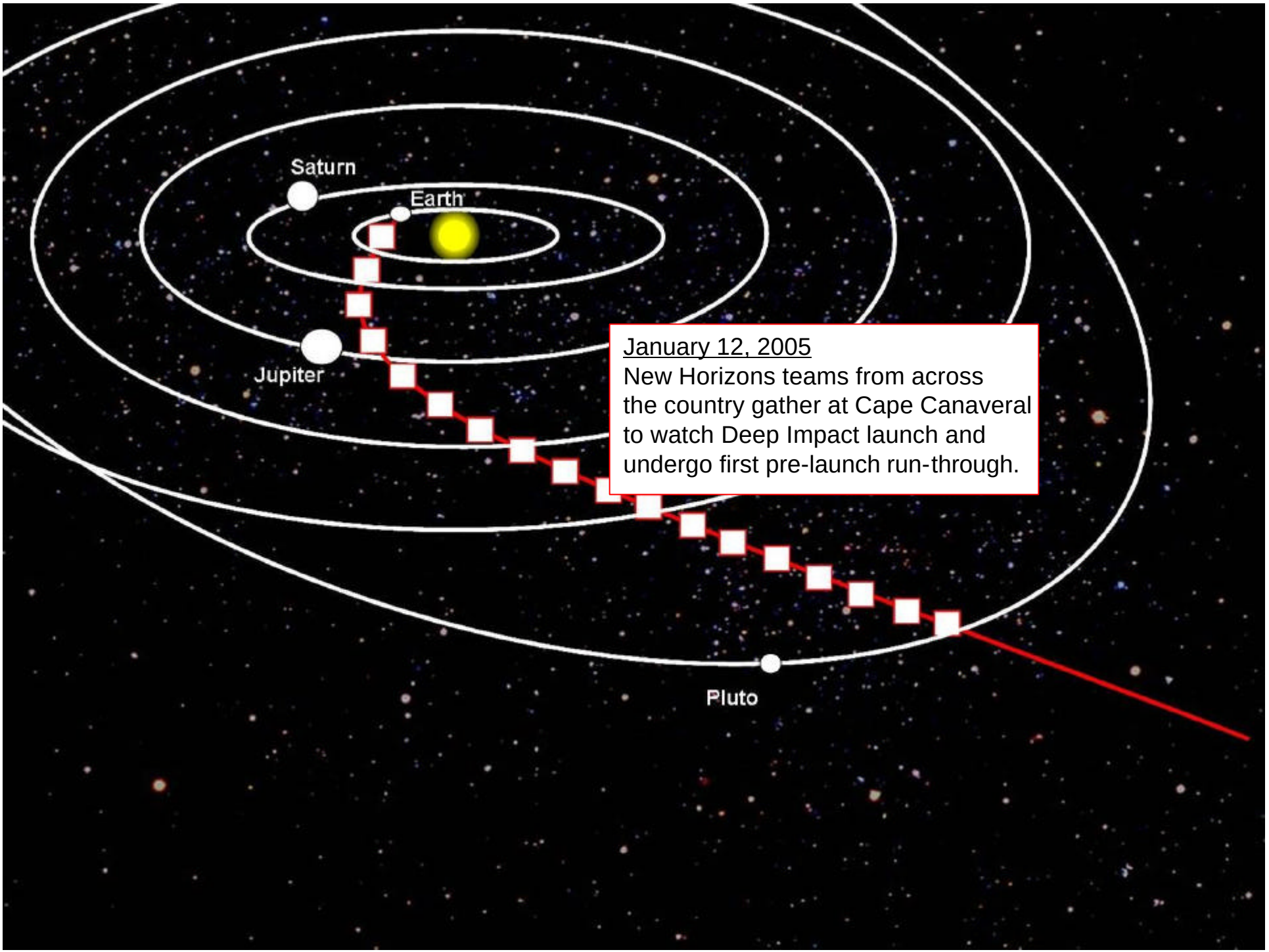
New Horizons was proposed to AO-OSS-01, NASA's Jan. 20, 2001, request for flyby mission proposals to Pluto-Charon and the Kuiper Belt. New Horizons was one of two proposals chosen for further concept study in June 2001, and NASA selected New Horizons as its Pluto mission on Nov. 29, 2001. Led by Principal Investigator (PI) Alan Stern of the Southwest Research Institute's Space Studies department, the mission team included major partners at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Stanford University, Ball Aerospace Corp., NASA Goddard Space Flight Center and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

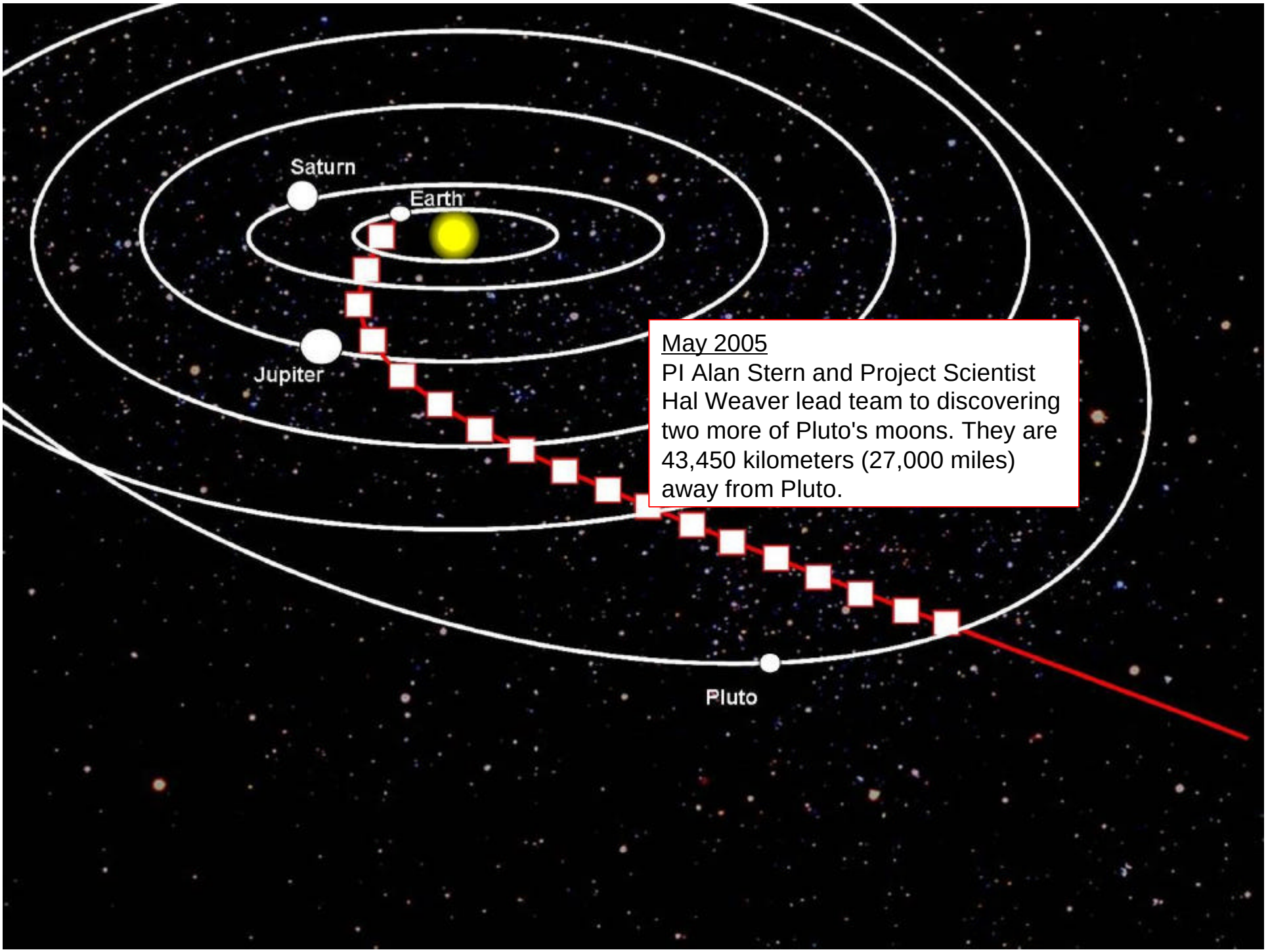


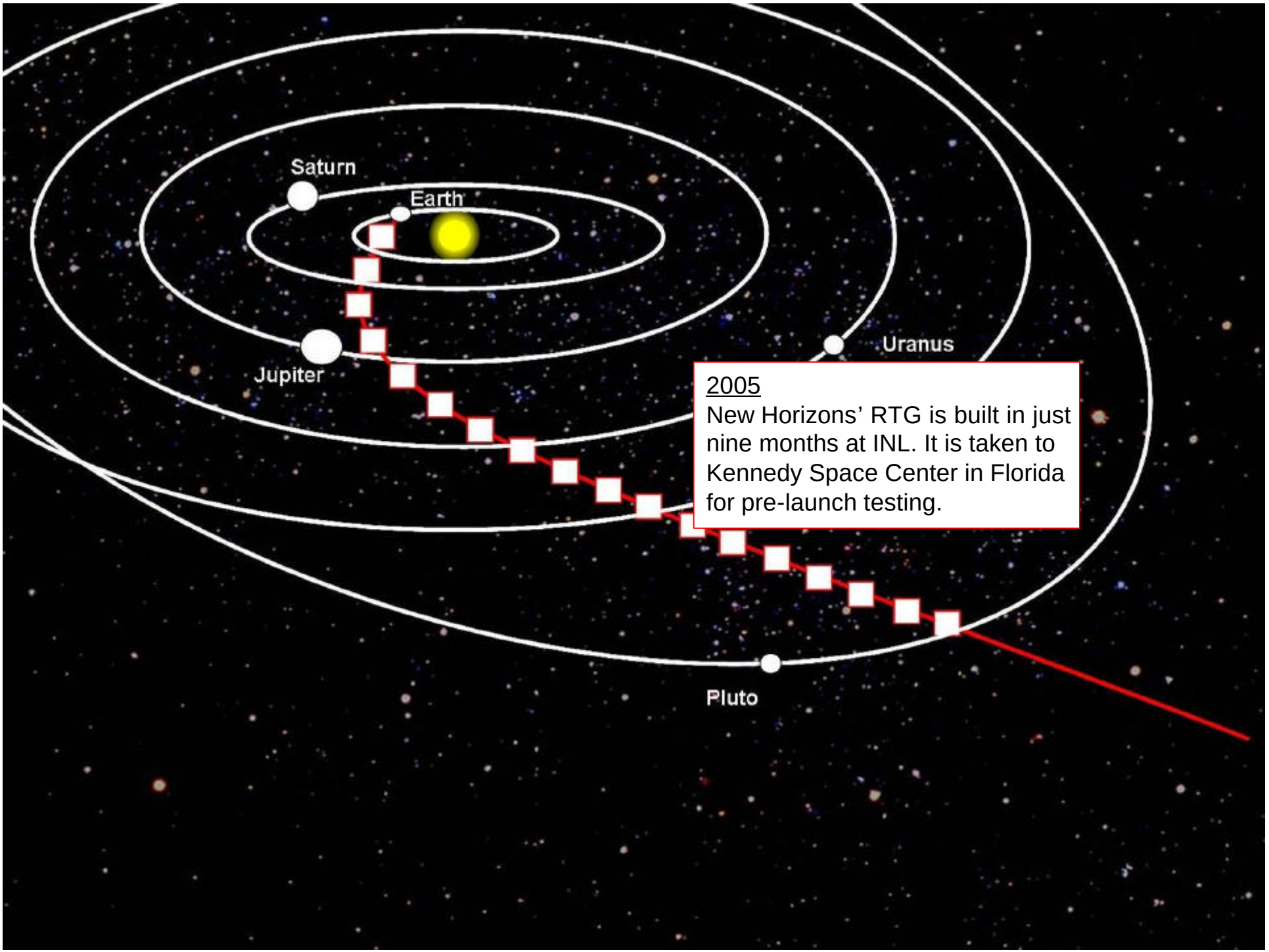
2002

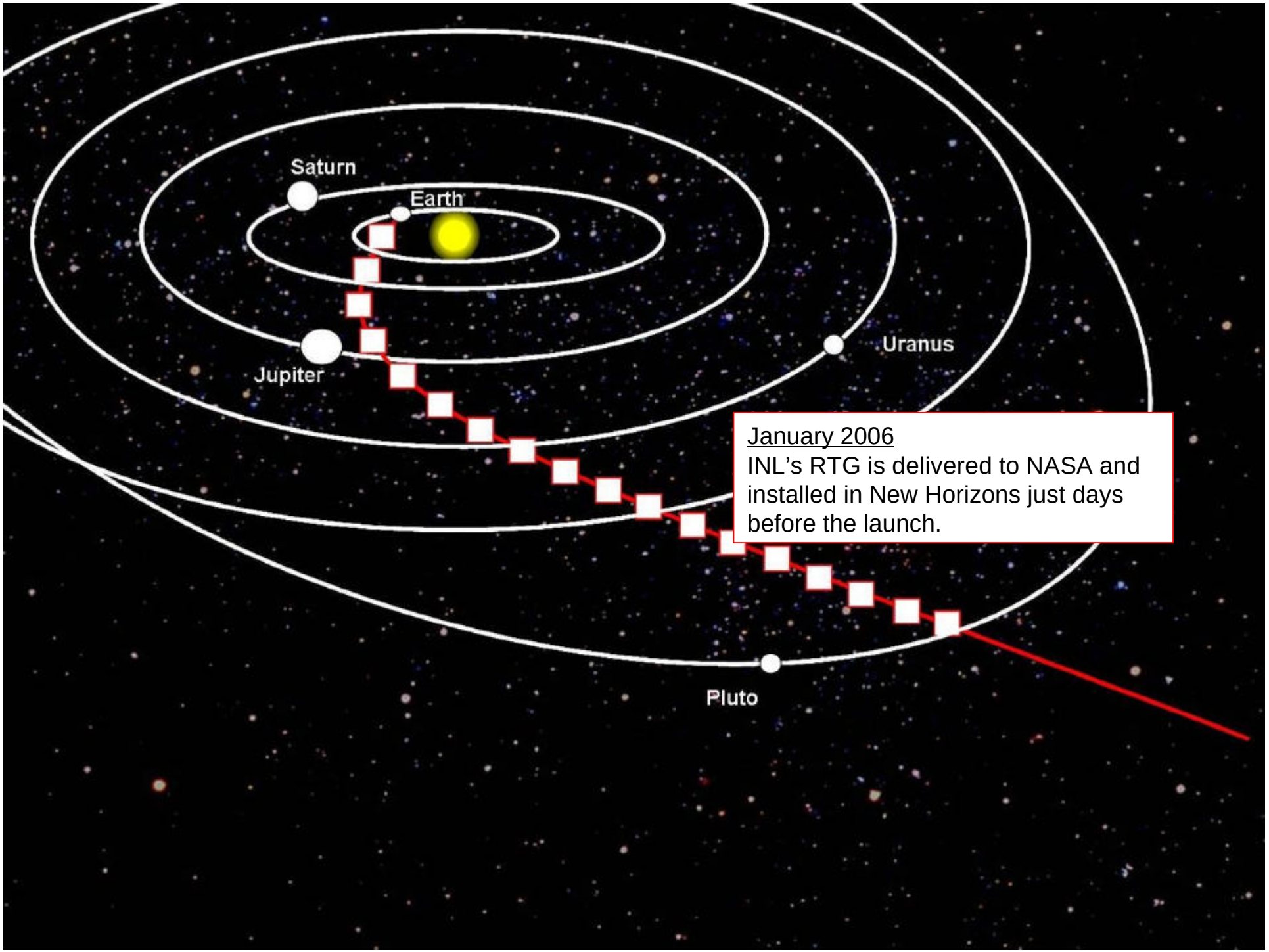
National Research Council's Decadal Survey for Planetary Science ranked the reconnaissance of Pluto-Charon and the Kuiper Belt as its highest priority for a new planetary mission this decade.

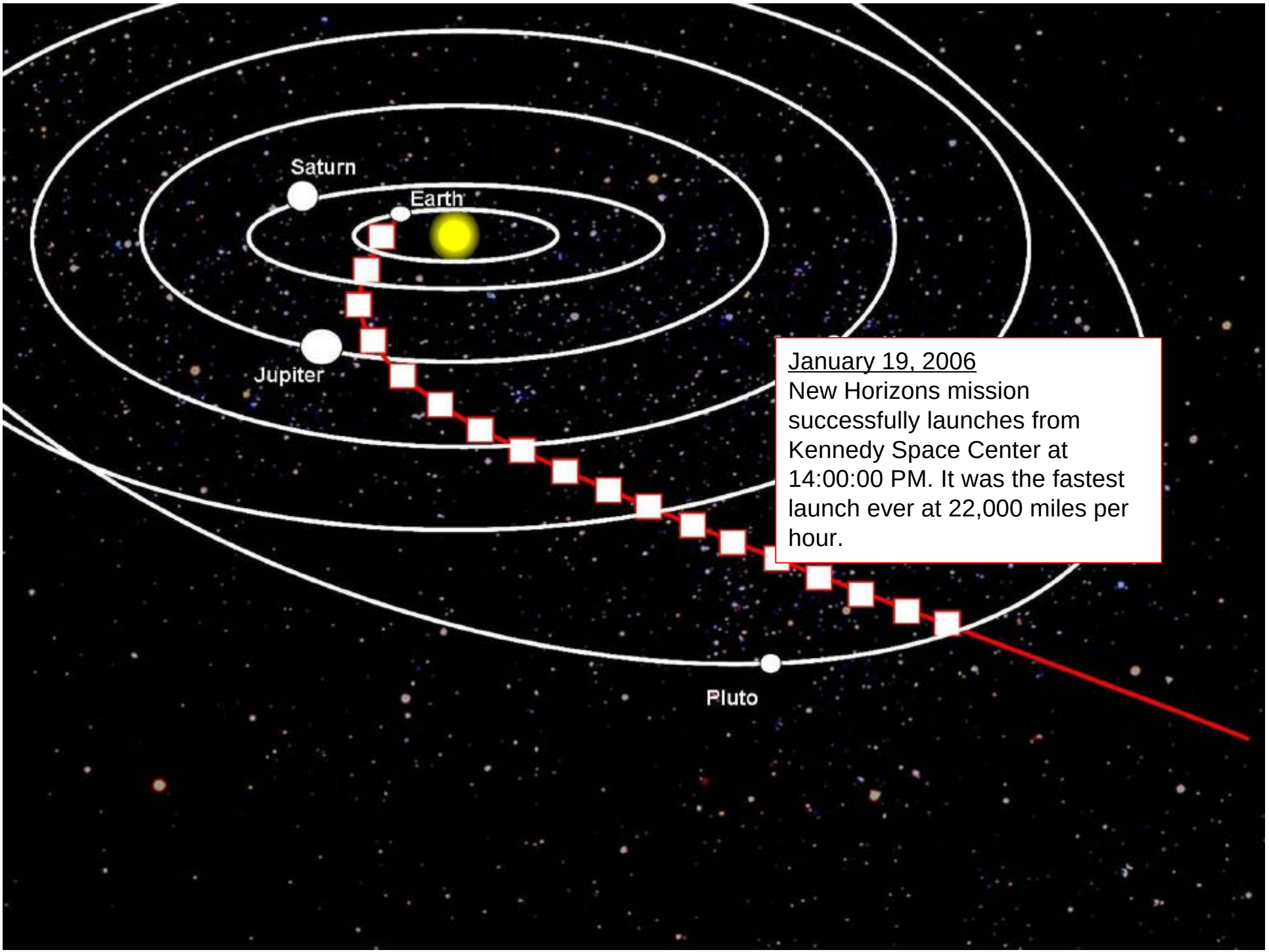

Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Uranus
2004
INL builds its Space and Security Power Systems Facility.
Pluto

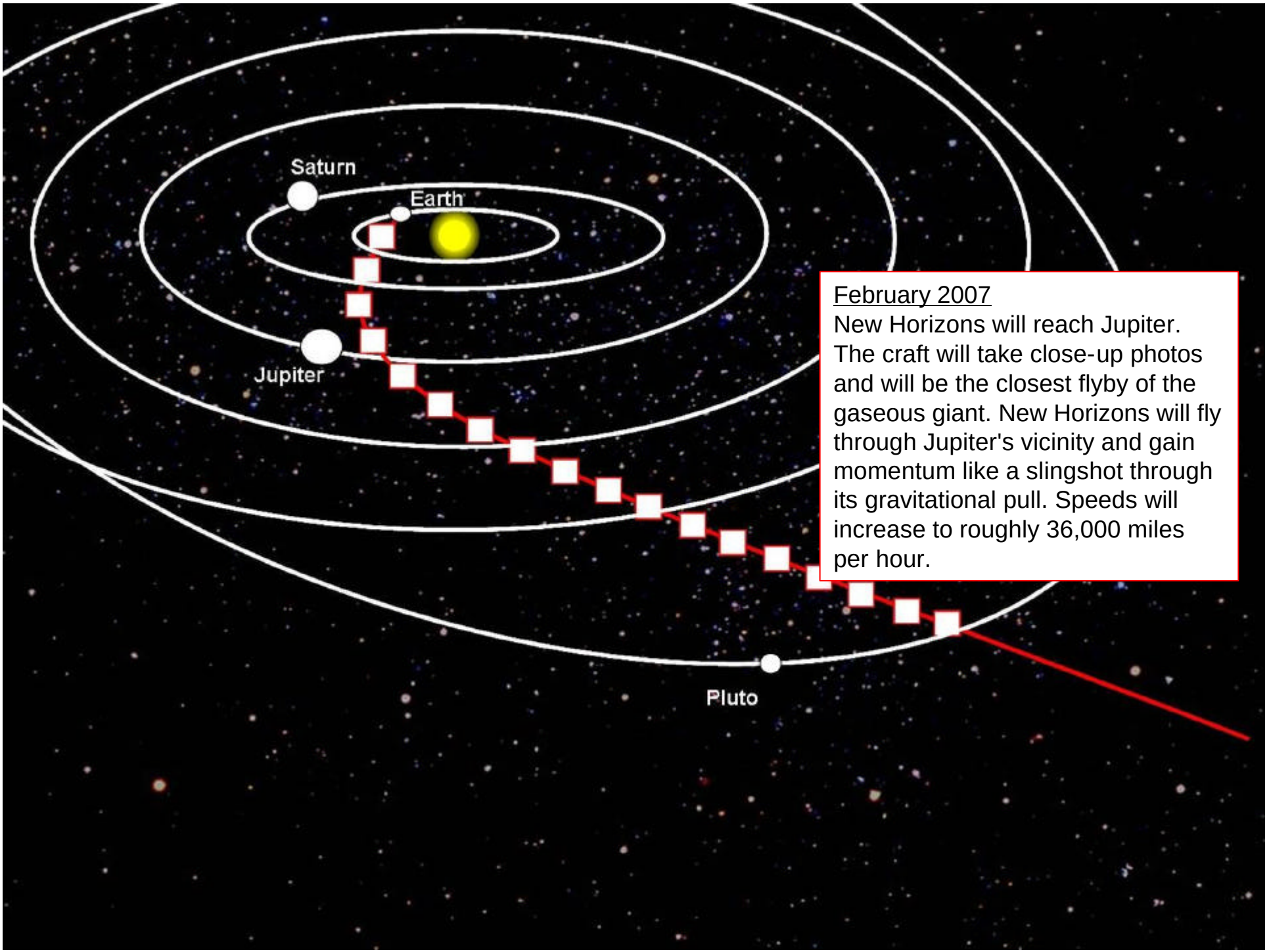

Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Pluto
January 12, 2005
New Horizons teams from across the country gather at Cape Canaveral to watch Deep Impact launch and undergo first pre-launch run-through.

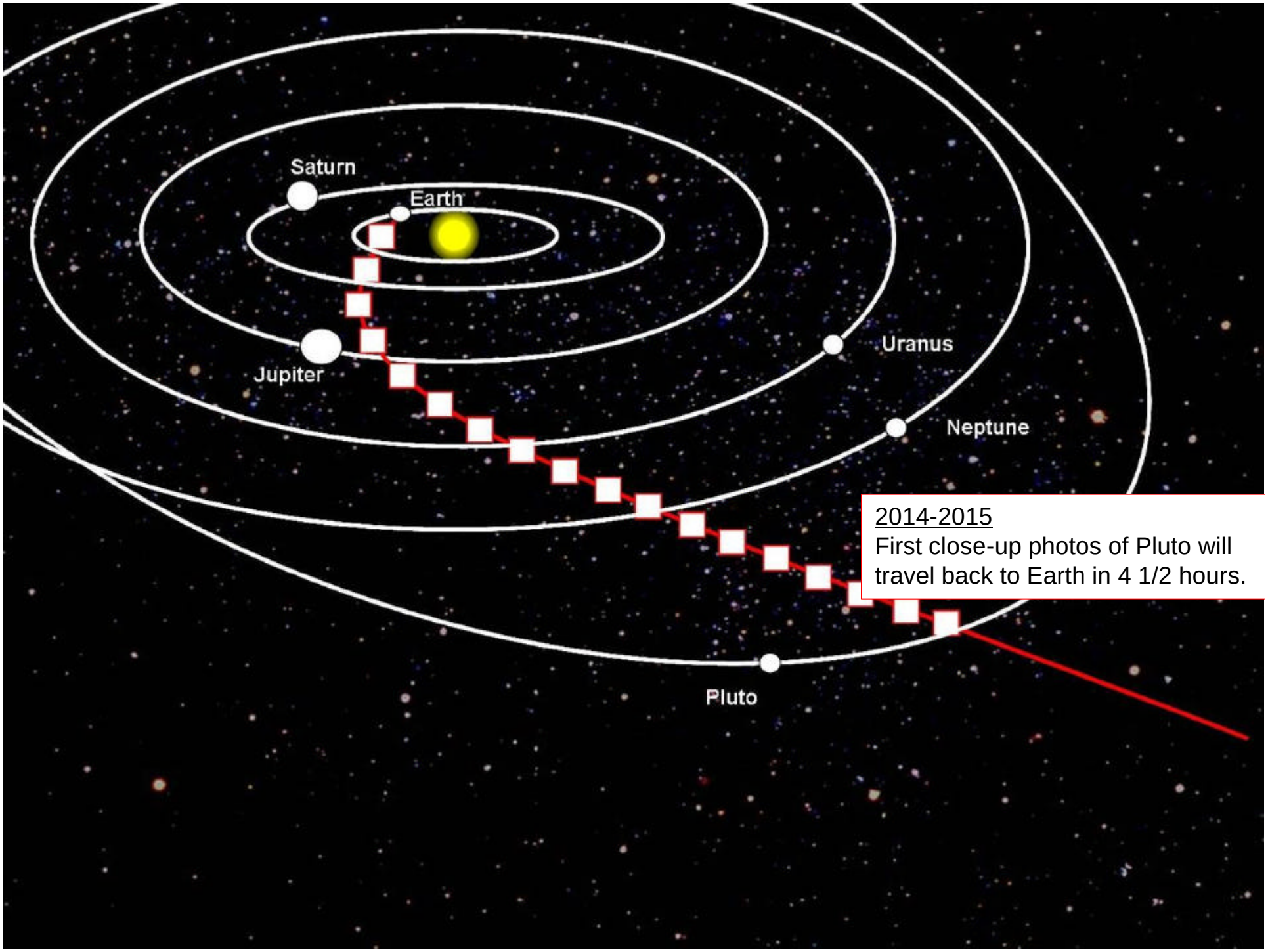

Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Pluto
May 2005
PI Alan Stern and Project Scientist Hal Weaver lead team to discovering two more of Pluto's moons. They are 43,450 kilometers (27,000 miles) away from Pluto.

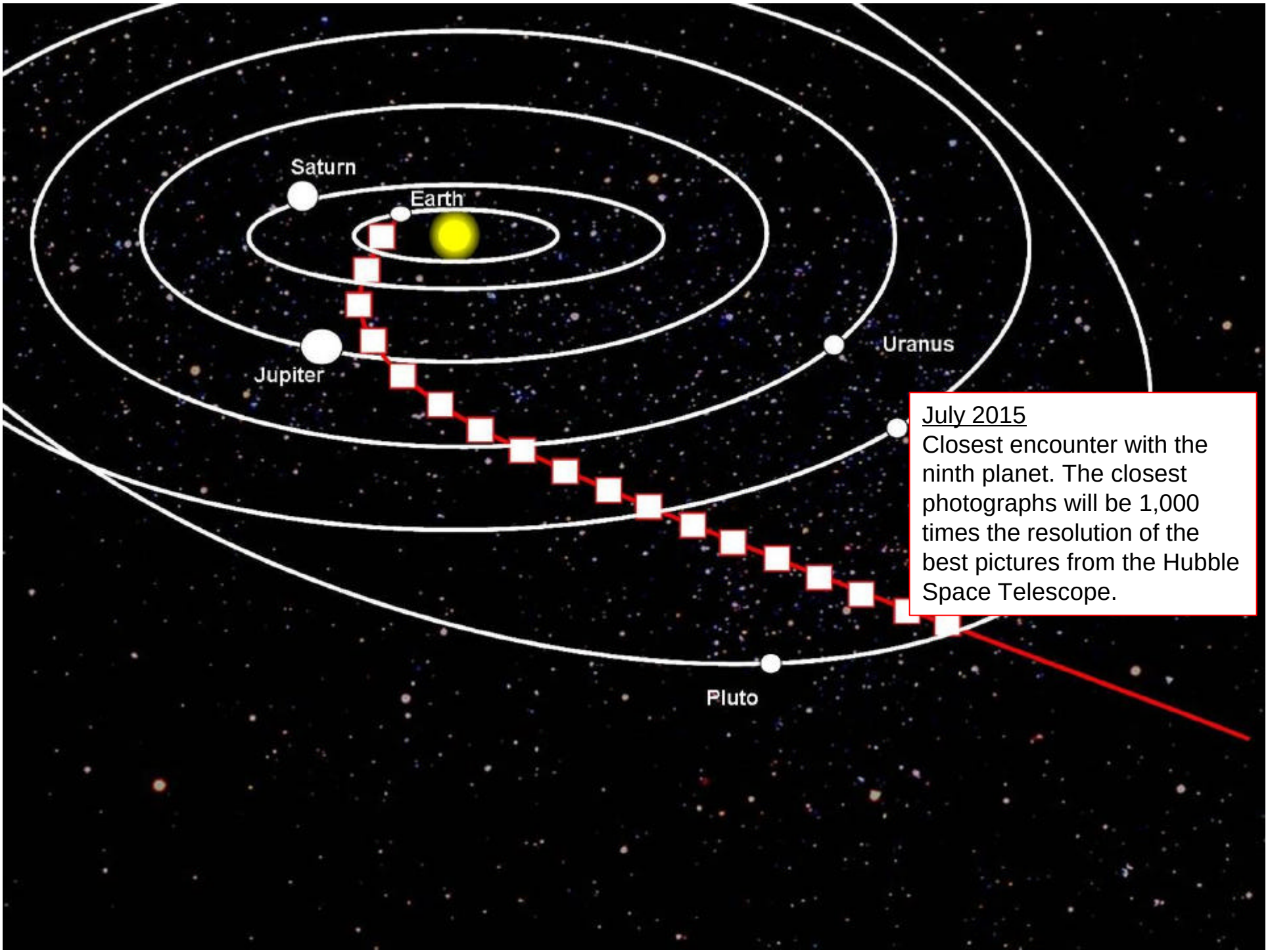

Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Uranus
Pluto
2005
New Horizons' RTG is built in just nine months at INL. It is taken to Kennedy Space Center in Florida for pre-launch testing.

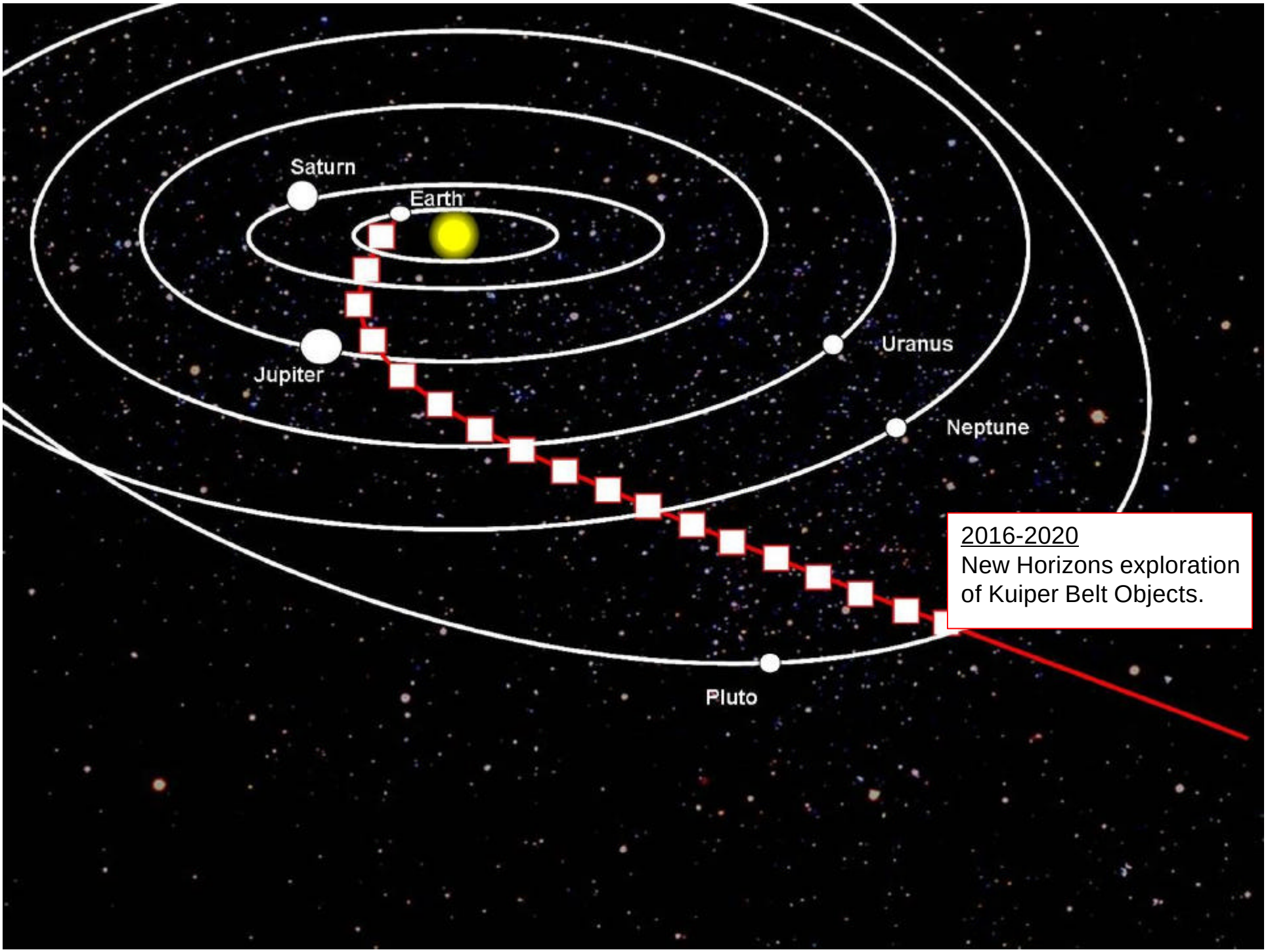

Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Uranus
Pluto
January 2006
INL's RTG is delivered to NASA and installed in New Horizons just days before the launch.


Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Pluto
January 19, 2006
New Horizons mission successfully launches from Kennedy Space Center at 14:00:00 PM. It was the fastest launch ever at 22,000 miles per hour.


Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Pluto
February 2007
New Horizons will reach Jupiter. The craft will take close-up photos and will be the closest flyby of the gaseous giant. New Horizons will fly through Jupiter's vicinity and gain momentum like a slingshot through its gravitational pull. Speeds will increase to roughly 36,000 miles per hour.


Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Uranus
Neptune
Pluto
2014-2015
First close-up photos of Pluto will travel back to Earth in 4 1/2 hours.


Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Uranus
Pluto
July 2015
Closest encounter with the ninth planet. The closest photographs will be 1,000 times the resolution of the best pictures from the Hubble Space Telescope.


Saturn
Earth
Jupiter
Uranus
Neptune
Pluto
2016-2020
New Horizons exploration of Kuiper Belt Objects.